SHRI ARJUN SINGH : This is the information that I have. I will try to find out and tell him.

MR. CHAIRMAN : You will detect it.

Import of Wheat

*63. SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN:† SHRIMATI KAMLA SINHA:

Will the Minister of FOOD be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have decided to import wheat from abroad;

(b) if so, what are the details in this regard and the reasons therefor ;

(c) what is its likely impact on the farmers of the country ;

(d) whether it is a fact that hoarding of foodgrains has increased leading to scarcity and high prices ; and

(e) if so, the steps Government Propose to take in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD (SHRI TARUN GOGOI) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Government has decided to import 1 million tonnes of wheat with a view to increase availability and to contain prices.

(c) It is not likely to affect the interests of farmers.

(d) It could be one of the factors.

(e) State Governments/Union Territories have been taking various steps against the hoarders.

श्री प्रमोद महाजन: सभापति जी, सरकार के कथन के अनुसार गेहूं की उपलब्धता में वृद्धि कर उनके मूल्यों पर काबू रखने के लिए एक दशलक्ष टन गेहूं का आयात हो रहा है जिसका किसानों के हितों पर कोई विपरीप प्रभाव नहीं होगा। सभापति जी, हिंदुस्तान में जब भी अन्य किन्हीं चीजों के मूल्य बढ जाते हैं तब न जरबरन लेवी होती है न आयात करके उनकी कीमतें कम करने का प्रयास होता है लेकिन जब कृषि उपज होती है, उनके मूल्यों में जब भी वृद्धि हो जाती है, या तो जबरन लेवी लगाकर किसानो को लूटा जाता है या आयात करके मूल्य वृद्धि से किसानों को जो लाभ पहुंचना है उस पहुंचने में विरोध किया जाता है। इस आधार पर मैं सरकार से यह जानना चाहूंगा कि इस आयातित गेहूं को क्या मूल्य दिया जा रहा है। क्या यह सच है कि भारतीय किसानों के गेहूं का सवा दो रुपये किलो देने में हिचकिचाहट करने वाली यह सरकार विदेशी किसानों को लगभग पांच रुपये किलो गेहूं के दाम दे रही है। यदि यह सच है तो अगर यही पांच रुपये किलो हिंदुस्तानी किसानों को दें तो वे आपको क्या एक दशलक्ष टन गेहूं नहीं देंगे ?

SHRI TARUN GOGOI : Sir, in fact the Government has decided to import one million tonnes because this time procurement was less. Then there was a decline of about 4 million tonnes in coarse grain. Rice was about 2 million tonnes less than the previous year. There was more pressure in respect of wheat. Besides, we have distributed more than 2 million tonnes ; about 24 lakh tonnes through PDS. Due to this reason we have to import wheat. Then about imposing levy, there is no imposition of levy on wheat. Keeping the interest of the farmers in view, we give them support price so that they are not compelled to resort to distress sale. Whatever they offer to us in the *Mandis* and markets, we buy. On whatever quantity they offer, we offer them support price. We don't make any imposition as far as wheat is concerned. Levy is imposed only on rice, Sir. Sir, it is true that the price of wheat is higher in the market. That is why we have decided to import wheat.

MR. CHAIRMAN : He says that we are importing it by paying double the price prevalent in India. Is it correct?

SHRI TARUN GOGOI : Sir, it is a fact that the international price is much higher than our internal price.

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH : The question is, whether it is higher or not ?

SHRI TARUN GOGOI : Sir, it is a fact that the international market price is higher than our issue price. (*Interruptions*). But we have not yet finalised the deal.

SHRI YASHWANT SINHA : What is the prevailing international rate now?

†The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri Pramod Mahajan.

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH : What is the international price of wheat?

SHRI KAMAL MORARKA : Sir, if they have not yet finalised then why they have announced that they are buying it ? Does he want that the people should increase the prices?

MR. CHAIRMAN : So that the people here may reduce the prices.

SHRI TARUN GOGOI : Sir, the market price is higher. That is why we have increased the allocation to the the PDS.

SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: I am not asking about the PDS. Please don't answer a question which I have not asked. I have asked ; what is the price you giving to the foreign farmers ? Is it true that it is 180 dollars per tonne? That comes to about Rs. 5 per kg. So, here you are giving Rs. 2.25 per kg. Are you going to give Rs. 5 per kg? Tommorrow I will give you one million without going to foreign country for purchase.

SHRI TARUN GOGOI : We have not yet finalised the deal.

SHRI YASHWANT SINHA : Is it true that when the Government announced its intention in dollar the price was 110 dollars and now it is 180 dollars ? Let the Minister deny this.

MR. CHAIRMAN : He is still negotiating.

SHRI YASHWANT SINHA : At what level he is negotiating ? What is the prevailing price ? As a result of the announcement of the Government, as a result of their annoucement of purchase, it has gone up from 110 dolars to 180 dolars.

SHRI TARUN GOGOI : Even before that it was higher. (*Interruptions*).

SHRI YASHWANT SINHA : Then give us the figures. I am saying that it was 110 dollars. Now it is 180 dollars. You give us the figures. (*Interruptions*).

श्री सभापति: चतुरानन जी, महाजन जी इन सब मामलों को बहुत अच्छी तरह से समझते हैं ।...(व्यवधान)... महाजन जी आप पूछिए ।

SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN : Can the Government give me a categorical assurance that they they will not purchase wheat from outside by giving more price than they give to the Indian farmers? You give this assurance. I don't want to know about the international price. I am not interested in it.

SHRI TARUN GOGOI : I can't give an assurance like that. (*Interruptions*).

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY : How can he give an assurance on the floor of the House? How can he answer that.. (*inteeruptions*)... In the international market there are fluctuations in prices (*Interruptions*)...

श्री सभापति : यह तो प्रश्नोत्तरकाल है । इसमें प्रश्नोत्तर होते हैं । एग्योरेंस वगैरा का मामला तो बाद का है ।

श्री प्रमोद महाजन : सभापति जी, ये पंजाब के फार्मर्स हैं जो इनको वीट भी दे रहे हैं और वोट भी दे रहे हैं, फिर भी ये उनको उचित पैसा नहीं दे रहे हैं ।

श्री एस० जयपाल रेड्डी : सभापति जी, पंजाब के फार्मर्स ने वोट नहीं दिया, वीट दिया है । ...(व्यवधान)

I would like to correct Mr. Mahajan ..(*Interruptions*)....

MR. CHAIRMAN : Shrimati Kamla Sinha.

SHRIMATI KAMLA SINHA : I would like to know from the Minister whether due to some reason Government is importing one million tonnes of wheat and at the same time Government has allowed FCI to export eight lakh tonnes of wheat. I would like to know what is the price, the foreign exchange that we are paying to the foreign farmers for one million tonnes of wheat that we are importing. At the same time how much money are we going to get by selling this eight lakh tonnes of wheat?

SHRI TARUN GOGOI : In fact, it was decided in 1990 to export 10 lakh tonnes of wheat. However, in 1990 it could not be exported. We could export only 2 lakh tonnes. Again in April 1991 it was decided to export 10 lakh tonnes of wheat. In total about 18 lakh tonnes of wheat was decided to be exported by the previous Government When we came to know that the procurement was lesser than that of the previous year -- It was less by more than 3 million tonnes — we reduced it to 8 lakh tonnes from 18 lakh tonnes. In fact, at that time the prices were lower. The international market price was also low. The price was between 92 and 109 dollars.

SHRIMATI KAMLA SINHA : Sir, my question was very straight. I wanted to know the amount of foreign exchange that Government is paying to the foreign farmers for one million tonnes of wheat that is being imported and how much money we are getting by selling 8 lakh tonnes of wheat to the foreign market.

MR. CHAIRMAN : What is going to be the loss to the budget?

SHRI TARUN GOGOI : I told that, Sir, Ninety two to 109 dollars was the price we got if for export of wheat.

MR. CHAIRMAN : She wanted to know for one million tonnes, how much could be the loss to the budget of India.

SHRI TARUN GOGOI : We have not yet finalised about how much we are going to pay. How can I say that? (*Interruptions*)....

SHRI YASHWANT SINHA : At 180 dollars one million tonnes..(*Interruptions*)....

श्रीमती कमला सिन्हा : क्या यह सही नहीं है कि फूड मिनिस्ट्री ने जनवरी महीने में यह फैसला किया और यह कहा है कि ..

श्री सभापति : श्री शान्ति त्यागी।

श्रीमती कमला सिन्हा : और यह कहा है कि फॉर द फर्स्ट टाइम हम चावल और गेहूं एक्सपोर्ट करने जा रहे हैं । हम ४ लाख टन गेहूं और नॉन बासमती राइस एक्सपोर्ट करने जा रहे हैं, क्या यह सही नहीं है ?

SHRI PARMOD MAHAJAN : Ministers are given special training in giving vague answers..(*Interruptions*)..

SHRIMATI KAMLA SINHA : I want to know the truth..(*Interruptions*)..

SHRI TARUN GOGOI : I am giving the truth. We had imported in 1988-89 and we had also imported in 1984-85.. (*Interruptions*).

SHRI YASHWANT SINHA : At what rate..(*Interruptions*)..

SHRI TARUN GOGOI : That I do not know.. (*Interruptions*)..

SHRI YASHWANT SINHA : We are exporting and importing at the same time at different prices, 100 dollars and 180 dollars...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI TARUN GOGOI : In 1988-89 also we imported two million tonnes of wheat..(*Interruptions*)..

SHRMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY : Lights have gone and it is very indicative of the Government. They want to keep us in the dark.

श्री प्रमोद महाजन : इतना गलत बोल रहे हैं कि रोशनी में भी आंखे बंद कर दी हैं।

श्री यशवन्त सिन्हा : सभापति महोदय, कमला जी के सवाल का जवाब उन्होंने नहीं दिया । ..(**व्यवधान**)..

श्रीमती कमला सिन्हा : आप सीधे-सीधे जवाब दीजिए न, मैंने बिल्कुल सीधा सवाल पूछा है ..(**व्यवधान**)..

It is a very important matter, Sir, I seek your protection. This decision was taken in Jan. 18, 1992.

SHRI TARUN GOGOI : Yes, this decision was taken to import in 1992.. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI YASHWANT SINHA : When they are taking a decision to import 1 million tonnes of wheat, they are also willing to export ..(*Interruptions*). Are the Governwent decisions scraps of paper that you take it one day and throw them away ? ..(*Interruptions*) We are in February, 1992.

MR. CHAIRMAN : You know how much time takes for a Government decision to be operative, to be practised. All of us are familiar..(*Interruptions*)

SHRIMATI KAMLA SINHA : Sir, we want to know..(*Interruptions*)

MR. CHAIRMAH : Ne has not said anything. Your views will be considered by him..(*Interruptions*).

श्री जगदीश प्रसाद माथुर : आखिर, रेट सही क्या है ? आप यह बताएं कि क्या वह घाटे में बेचेंगे ? अगर प्राइस फिक्स नहीं की है तो यह बताएं क्या घाटे में बेचेंगे ? ...(**व्यवधान**)...

श्री चतुरानन मिश्र : यह किस भाव में बेच रहे हैं और किस भाव में खरीदेंगे ? यह तो बता दीजिए कम से कम।

श्री जगदीश प्रसाद माथुर : इतना यह स्पष्ट कर दें कि क्या हानि उठाकर बेचेंगे या लाभ उठाकर बेचेंगे ?

अगर रेट नहीं तय किया हैं ठीक हैं, लेकिन यह बताएं कि इतना पैसा देना पड़ेगा, इतना पैसा हमको मिलेगा ।

श्री सभापति : अगर कोई चीज कम्पलीट न हो . . . **(व्यवधान)** . . .

श्री जगदीश प्रसाद माथुर : रेट का सवाल नहीं हैं, लेकिन यह बताएं कि क्या हानि उठाकर बेचेंगे या फायदे में बेचेंगे ? इतना बता दें ।

MR. CHAIRMAN : It is a very hypothetical question.

श्री जगदीश प्रसाद माथुर : नहीं साहब, हाइपोथेटिकल क्वैश्चन नहीं है ।

श्री सभापति : तो यह क्या है कि अगर ऐसा हुआ तो ऐसा करेंगे क्या ?

श्री जगदीश प्रसाद माथुर : ऐसा नहीं है । यह नीति का सवाल है, देश के हित में है । फायदा होता है, ठीक है, लेकिन घाटा होता है तो क्यों बेचें ? . . . **(व्यवधान)** . . .

सभापति : प्रश्नोत्तर काल में नीति का सवाल नहीं आता है । यह लिखा हुआ है किताब में । आपने कहा – नीति का सवाल । नीति का सवाल यहां नहीं आता ।

श्री जगदीश प्रसाद माथुर : नीति का सवाल है, सर । क्या घाटा उठाकर भी बेचेंगे ? यह कहें कि हम घाटा उठाकर नहीं बेचेंगे ।

श्री राम अवधेश सिंह : किस भाव पर बेच रहे हैं ?

श्री जगदीश प्रसाद माथुर : यह सौदा क्यों किया गया ? नीति बता दें कि क्यों किया जा रहा है ? . . **(व्यवधान)** . .

DR. G. VIJAY MOHAN REDDY : Rajasthan is starving. Kalahandi is starving. They must come out with facts . . *(Interruptions)*

MR CHAIRMAN : We have to go to other supplementaries we are only in the third question. . . . *(Interruptions)*

SHRIMATI KAMLA SINHA : The Minister has not replied to my question.

MR. CHAIRMAN : He has replied to what you wanted.

श्री शांति त्यागी : सभापति जी, देश में अनाज की कमी नहीं है । मंत्री जी अगर जमाखोरों के पास जो गेहूं है, वह निकाल दें तो क्या यह आप मानेंगे कि देश में अनाज पूरा हो जाएगा । यह मैं आपसे प्रश्न करना चाहता हूं, नम्बर एक । दूसरा, अध्यक्ष जी किसानों में पिछले प्रोक्योरमेंट के जमाने में सवा दो सौ रुपये क्विंटल पर गेहूं खरीदा गया और अब चार सौ रुपए फी क्विंटल अमेरीकी गेहूं खरीदा जा रहा हैं, जो एक मिलियन टन एम्पोर्ट किया जा रहा हैं, जो हमारी सूचना हैं मैं यह भी जानना चाहता हूं कि आस्ट्रेलिया का गेहूं कम खरीदकर भारत सरकार अमरीकी गेहूं को चार सौ रुपए प्रति क्विंटल क्यों खरीद रही है ? मैं यह मंत्री जी से जानना चाहता हूं कि चार सौ रुपए छोड़ दीजिए, क्या पौने चार सौ रुपए का रेट भी आप आगामी प्रोक्योरमेंट में भारतीय किसान को उसके गेहूं का देने को तैयार है मंत्री जी, उदारीकरण की नीति चल रही है, आप किसान के साथ अन्याय मत कीजिए । आप वहां भी उदार हो जाइए ।

SHRI TARUN GOGOI : As regards the problem of scarcity of foodgrains, we have taken various mesures against the hoarders. About 14,000 raids have been conducted in the meantime and about 500 people have been arrested and about 400 cases have been prosecuted.

SHRI KAMAL MORARKA : What is the question and what is the answer ? He is reading out from the notes given by the officials.

श्री दिग्विजय सिंह : सवाल कुछ है, जवाब कुछ है ।

श्री राम अवधेश सिंह : सवाल क्या है, जवाब क्या दे रहे हैं आप ।

SHRI TARUN GOGOI : He was asking about raids and about the procurewent price. We have not yet decided the next procurement price. We will decide it on the recommendations of the commission for Agricultural costs and Prices.

MR. CHAIRMAN : He says you must consider the Australian offer also which, he says, is cheaper.

SHRI TARUN GOGOI : We will consider anything which is the cheapest

MR. CHAIRMAN : The Minister says he will buy whichever is the cheapest.

श्री राम अवधेश सिंह : अमरीका से मंहगा खरीद रहे हैं, आस्ट्रेलिया से सस्ता मिल रहा है, क्यों नहीं खरीद रहे हैं? सीधा सवाल है।

श्री शांति त्यागी : सभापति जी, मैंने यह पूछा था कि क्या भारतीय किसान को आप पौने चार सौ रुपए क्विंटल का भाव देंगे आगामी प्रोक्योरमेंट में, यह जवाब नहीं दिया ?

श्री सभापति : वह तो कमीशन की रिकमेंडेशन्स के बाद होगा।

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY : He has put a specific question as to whether..

SHRI TARUN GOGOI : I have already said it. We have yet to decide about the procurement price and we do it on the recommendations of the Commission for Agricultural costs and prices (CACP).

श्री दिग्विजय सिंह : सभापति जी, शांति त्यागी जी के सवाल का जवाब तो मिल जाए। उन्होंने बड़ा अच्छा सवाल पूछा है, उसका जवाब तो मिल जाए।

SHRI TARUN GOGOI : I have said it, we shall decide it on the recommendations of the CACP.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Shri Ramnarayan Goswawi.

श्री राम अवधेश सिंह : इतना तो आश्वासन आप दे ही सकते हैं कि जिस रेट पर अमरीका से खरीद रहे हैं, वह भारतीय किसान को दगे। बोलिए न।

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Ramnarayan Goswami please put your question.

SHRI RAMNARAYAN GOSWAMI: In the year 1990-91 our country has achieved production of 54·5 million tonnes of wheat. As on 1st February this year we have a stock of 14·5 million tonnes of wheat. Now the harvest is nearing and for the coming two months, March and April, at best we require only 3·10 million tonnes of wheat. When that is our position, I want to know what the reason behind importing wheat is. Is it under the pressure of the United States of America that you have to import wheat from that country ? It has been reported in the press and this is what Mrs. Kamla Sinha has asked of the Minister, that the cost of imported wheat would be about US $180 per tonne as compared to about US $100 per tonne that we are likely to get for the 2 million tonnes exported by our country recently. Is it a fact ?

SHRI TARUN GOGOI : It is not a fact that we are going to import it under the American pressure. We are prepared to buy from any country.

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH : You have got enough harvest. And you don't require all that. Then what for are you importing ? Who are you going to satisfy with that ?

SHRI TARUN GOGOI : Please listen to me. Their is a buffer stock policy. The Government of India has a great responsibility not only to feed the PDS but also to ensure stocks for meeting an emergency. That is why the Government has got a bufferstock policy. As on 1-1-1992 we had a stock of 5·3 million tonnes of wheat. So, the buffer stocks should have been 7·70 million tonnes. Then also, on 1-4-92, my stocks will come down to 1·70 million tonnes whereas, according to our buffer stock requirements, it should be 3·7 million tonnes. So, we are short by two million tonnes in our buffer stocks..*(Interruptions)*..

MR. CHAIRMAN : Yes, Mr. Salve.

SHRI M.S. GURUPADASWAMY : Sir, this is something strange. Normally, I do not interrupt. Sir, we exported wheat in the past..*(Interruptions)*..just to earn foreign exchange. We had enough at that time. But now we hare been exporting wheat and also importing wheat simultaneously ! And, Sir, we have got enough wheat also and we have got enough stocks of wheat here. So, what made you import wheat from America just at this juncture to build up buffer stocks under free market operations ?

MR. CHAIRMAN : Just a minute. Mr. Salve wanted to put a question. He can answer that also. Yes, Mr. Salve.

SHRI N.K.P. SALVE: Sir, our agriculturists and farmers have been in penury for long years. If you help them, I can understand. But, helping the hoarders, profiteers and the racketeers who have cornered their wheat is something which we cannot accept and if Mr. Mahajan is to procure one million tonnes for this, it is something which this House will never agree to. The crucial question for consideration is whether there has been adequate production of wheat and, if so, why procurement has not been adequate. That is question number one.

Secondly, a very legitimate question that arises is whether you import only to help the hoarders, racketeers and profiteers. If you have a policy for the essential commodities, why don't you have the same policy for other essential products also ? ....(*Interruptions*)....

SHRI TARUN GOGOI : Yes, Sir. It is a fact that procurement of wheat was 7.75 million tonnes, in the previous year it was 11 07 million tonnes. When the market price is higher than the support price.... (*Interruptions*)..... the farmers are not compelled to sell.....(*Interruptions*)

SHRI N.K.P. SALVE : Was the support price lower than the market price when you procured ?...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI TARUN GOGOI : Last time, the market price was much higher all along than our support price. So, we could not compel the farmers to sell at that price...*Interruptions*)...

SHRI N.K.P. SALVE : Then it could have been purchased in the free market (*Interruptions*)....

SHRI TARUN GOGOI : You cannot buy in the free market. It is the policy of the Government.. (*Interruptions*)....

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes, Mr. Trivedi.

SHRI DINESHBHAI TRIVEDI : Sir, I am really confused. I do not know why something has been exported and then again imported. The darkness that was there in the House was not merely symbolic. We are all in the dark. It is really a serious matter. One of the reasons why we are strong today is because we are self sufficient in food production which has been our basic foundation. This is what the Nehruvian model is. What I am worried about is that the honourable Minister has said that food-grains production has declined. May I think the Minister whether one of the reasons is your 'open door" policy ? I am all for it as long as the benefits reach the right people (*Interruptions*). ..

MR. CHAIRMAN : You please put your question.

SHRI DINESHBHAI TRIVEDI : I am coming to my question now. You have allowed, for example., Pepsi-Cola. They are involved in our agricultural production. Is it because they are producing more potatoes instead of wheat ? Is not that the reason why, wheat production is going down ?.... (*Interruption*).....

SHRI TARUN GOGOI : Sir, it has nothing to do with our pclicy. This year, Sir, there was more pressure on wheat because of the decline in coarse grains..... (*Interruptions*)..

SHRI DENESHBHAI TRIVEDI : Why was there a decline ?..... (*Interruptions*)...

SHRI TARUN GOGOI : There was a decline of 4 million tonnes in coarse grains and there was a decline in the Kharif crop of rice also. Therefore, there was more pressure on wheat.... ..(*Interruptions*)....

SHRI DINESHBHAI TRIVEDI : You have not answered my main question. Is it because of the fact that more potatoes are being grown instead of wheat ? Is it because of that the production has come down? ....(*Interruptions*)..

SHRI TARUN GOGOI : About potatoes and other things, I cannot answer. The agriculture Minister is here and he can answer that question.. ..(*Interruptions*)..

MR. CHAIRMAN : Yes, Mr. Jagesh Desai.

SHRI JAGESH DESAI : Sir, what was the reason for the Government or the FCI releasing six lakhs tonnes to the private sector and why the prices have not come down ? I am very happy now that our Prime Minister decided that no further export of *basmati* rice would be allowed. This is a very senstitive subject. I would like to knoew whether the Government will see to it that in furure they do not sell wheat in the private sector, but offer it only to the PDS.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Question Hour is over.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Shifting of Offices under the N.C.R. Plan

*64. SHRI DHULESHWAR MEENA : Will the Minister of URBAN DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) the progress made so far in shifting various Central Government